

U. S. Department of Justice

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FEDERAL BUREAU

of

INVESTIGATION

CLASSIFICATION NO.

100-34956

Bureau File Number

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Serials

Volume Number

100-34958

See also Nos.

C

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

NEW YORK

FILE NO.

NY 100-98909 GM

REPORT MADE AT NEW YORK	DATE WHEN MADE APR 9 1951	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 3/6, 23, 26/51	REPORT MADE BY HAROLD K. LIGHT
TITLE NORMAN KINGSLEY MAILER			CHARACTER OF CASE SECURITY MATTER - C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

Subject born 1/31/23, resides at 102 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, NY, and is connected with Rinehart and Co., Inc., publishers, 232 Madison Avenue, NYC. Subject was a sponsor of CRC activities in support of Communist leaders in 1948 and 1949. Activities with Hollywood Ten and NCASP, set out. Informant advises MAILER was a concealed Communist and closely connected with CP up until 1945. Description set out.

- P -

DETAILS:

Residence and Business Address

The records of the New York State Motor Vehicle Bureau reflect that NORMAN KINGSLEY MAILER resides at 102 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, New York, and is connected with Rinehart and Company, Inc., publishers, 232 Madison Avenue, New York City.

On March 23, 1951, Confidential Informant T-1, of

APPROVED AND FORWARDED:	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES
COPIES OF THIS REPORT 5 Bureau (100-370923) 2 Newark 3 New York		100-34958-1 SEARCHED.....INDEXED..... SERIALIZED.....FILED..... APR 10 1951 FBI - NEWARK

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

NEW YORK

FILE NO.

NK

100-34956

ab

REPORT MADE AT NEWARK	DATE WHEN MADE 5/4/51	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 4/23;5/1/51	REPORT MADE BY REGINALD C. VINCENT
TITLE NORMAN KINGSLEY MAILER			CHARACTER OF CASE SECURITY MATTER - C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

NORMAN KINGSLEY MAILER born 1/31/23, the son of **ISSAC BARNETT MAILER** and **FANNY SCHNEIDER**, at Long Branch, N.J.

- RUC -

DETAILS:

Mrs. C. J. JENNINGS, Bureau of Health, City of Long Branch, New Jersey, advised that the birth of the subject is recorded in Book 3, Page 143, and reflects that he was born as **NORMAN KINGSLEY MAILER** on January 31, 1923, at Long Branch, New Jersey. He was described as a white male and the first child of **ISSAC BARNETT MAILER**, born in South Africa, and **FANNY SCHNEIDER**, born in New Jersey. The father's age was shown as 32 and his occupation as accountant. His mother's age was shown as 25, no occupation indicated. Attending physician is recorded as **S. B. SLOCUM**.

- REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN -

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BOOKS AND THINGS

By LEWIS GANNETT

BARBARY SHORE. By Norman Mailer. Rinehart. 312 pages. \$3.

NORMAN MAILER was not yet twenty-five when he wrote "The Naked and the Dead," which was incomparably the most successful and perhaps the best of the bitter G. I. war reports which, immediately after the war, appeared as novels. It made Mr. Mailer a marked man—"the greatest writer to come out of his generation," according to Sinclair Lewis. I suspect that if Mr. Lewis could read "Barbary Shore," he would modify his verdict. For "Barbary Shore" is self-conscious and arty in its writing, muddy in its symbolism and half-baked in its "revolutionary socialist" philosophy.

The Second Novel Is the Test

Quick success is even harder on young writers than on other folk. America is full of would-be writers with one good autobiographical novel in their systems, but scant genuinely creative, imaginative talent. Yet once a man has written one successful novel, he feels compelled to assume the role of the Literary Figure. He reads Joyce, Proust and Kafka, and experiments in imitating them. He is likely to feel that he owes it to the public to explain politics to it. He ceases to observe; he preaches. His second novel is pretentious and poor. Pretty soon, if he does not turn into a Hollywood script-writer, he is forgotten.

Mr. Mailer has talents which may yet save him from the disaster of his second novel. This is a story of six people in a Brooklyn rooming-house: Mike Lovett, the almost faceless narrator, an ex-G. I., who has lost his memory of who he is, but hopes to become an author; McLeod, a talkative department-store window-dresser, who turns out to be an ex-Communist who had done a little sub rosa work

for the F. B. I. and regretted both careers; Hollingsworth, a broker's clerk who turns out to be a secret government agent; Guinevere, the landlady, a sexy ex-burlesque queen who turns out to be McLeod's secret wife; Guinevere's nasty little daughter, Monina, and a half-mad girl named Lannie, who goes readily to bed with any man, but gives no one satisfaction, and paints her windows black to keep the world out.

Mr. Mailer's Story and Sermon

The tale begins as rather amusing low comedy, develops as something of a mystery story, and ends, following a long sermon, by McLeod, which puts Hollingsworth to sleep, as the tragedy of a man who wanted a good revolution. The sermon and the tragedy are, I suppose, the heart of the book as Mr. Mailer conceived it.

"The history of the last twenty years may be divided into two decades," Mike Lovett remarks, "a decade of economic crisis, and a decade of war and the preparations for new war." That, undoubtedly, is the history of our times as Mr. Mailer has observed them. He himself must have felt, like McLeod, the idealistic pull of the Communist dream, and been outraged at the degradation of an ideal, yet dissatisfied with mere opposition to Communism as an alternative. McLeod expects the world to go to hell in another war, but he has a faint hope that changing times will somehow bring the triumph of a new kind of "revolutionary socialism," dedicated to freedom and equality. . . . It isn't very convincing, and it sounds like the product of Marxist reading, not of life in America.

Stooping to Story-Telling

Yet the odd fact is that when Mr. Mailer isn't delivering neo-Marxist sermons or writing surrealist prose, he still has the phonographic ear for vulgar American speech which made "The Naked and the Dead" so disturbingly memorable. Guinevere is an appallingly convincing retired lady of burlesque, vocally bored with the male reaction to her fleshy charms, but habituated to it. Monina, in her brief appearances, is obscenely real; Mr. Mailer must have studied just such a brat. Hollingsworth, who pauses in his expert sleuthing to date a cafe waitress, is a character of expertly defined talents and limitations. When Mr. Mailer stoops to tell a story, he can tell it well. But as soothsayer to the world, or as a would-be Kafka-Bulgakov, he stumbles and stammers and, what is worse, bores.



Robert Frank

Norman Mailer

N.Y. Herald Tribune
5/24/51
Pg 17.

100-34956*-3

SEARCHED.....	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED.....	FILED.....
MAY 25 1951	
FBI - NEWARK	

Director, FBI (100-370923)

8-9-61

SAC, Newark (100-34956)

NORMAN MAILER
Betty Furness Program
Channel 13, WNTA-TV
Newark, N.J.
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Re telephone call to Bureau today.

At approximately 9:45 p.m. on 8-8-61, SA JAMES R. LAUGHLIN, of this office, tuned in to the above show, which is scheduled to run from 8:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. NORMAN MAILER was being interviewed by BETTY FURNESS. Mr. LAUGHLIN did not hear the forepart of the program but heard one statement by MAILER which indicated he was being critical of the FBI.

At another point in the interview MAILER made a statement to the effect that the FBI was probably glad that Cuba went Communist. MAILER had been questioned concerning his early approval of CASTRO and made a statement that it was too bad the Cuba situation turned out the way it did. The statement about the FBI was in connection with the statement that some people in the U.S. were probably glad that it turned out as it did. He inferred that the Communist threat in the U.S. had subsided, and the FBI had nothing to do until the Cuban situation developed as it did.

UACB, no action will be taken by this office.

2 - Bureau
2 - Newark
(1 - NK 80-725)
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